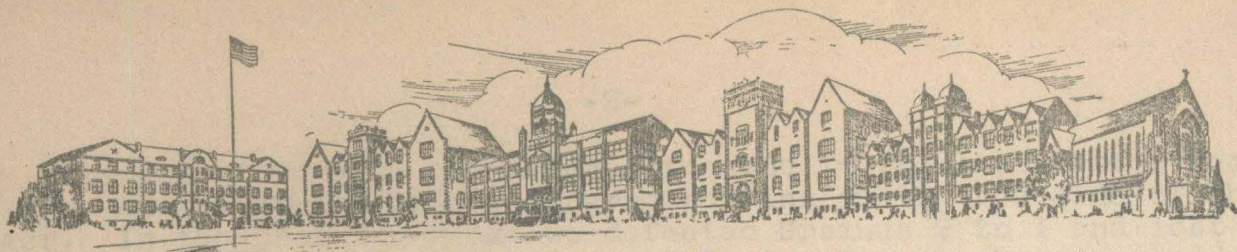


from



# MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

June 1, 1945

Number 62

Dear Fellows:

We have just come from a meeting at which plans were completed for another commencement--the third and last of this academic year. The big day for about ten men who will receive degrees and approximately eighty-three Bluejackets who will be given special certificates will be Sunday, June 24. And although the June Commencement always will be the traditional one around here, this year it will again be streamlined into a single day.

Once again the boss tossed a ringer when he persuaded Rear Admiral William M. Fechteler, one of the battle-honored heroes of the Southwest Pacific and now on duty in Washington as Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, to come to the campus to review the Naval battalion and deliver the commencement address. He will speak in the College Chapel on Sunday, June 24, at 3:30 p.m. Chaplain John W. Doberstein will be the baccalaureate speaker at 10:30 o'clock on the morning of Commencement Day.

Rear Admiral Fechteler, who has seen his share of action in two of America's wars, is the man who was called in from sea shortly after Pearl Harbor to lick the difficult task of meeting the increased demand for officers during the period in which the Navy expanded to win the victories so many of you fellows have written in your logs. With that job well in hand, he was assigned to the command of the U.S.S. INDIANA and then to a Southwest Pacific command. He was awarded the Navy's Distinguished Service Medal for his meritorious service as attack group commander during the landing operations at Los Negros and Humboldt Bay and as Attack Force Commander at Biak, Noemfoor Islands, and Cape Sansapor. Later the Army gave him its Distinguished Service Medal for his distinguished participation in the occupation of Morotai and the landings at Leyte, Lingayen, and Palawan. All that is for the benefit of some of you fellows who may have served under him or with forces associated with his command.

When Muhlenberg men started going to war more than three years ago, the Executive Committee of the Alumni Association decided to call off the big reunion parties that always highlighted commencement until you could be back for one big and smashing Victory Reunion. We're sticking to that policy this year just so that you who are too far away to come back won't feel you are being left out in the cold. The government also has asked that affairs of that kind be cancelled because of the tight transportation situation and, in spite of what a few other colleges are doing, we are heeding that request. Only Alumni affair scheduled over the commencement season is the pre-commencement smoker of the Allentown Club to be held at the Livingston Club in Allentown on Friday evening, June 22. The Allentown boys want any of you who may be in this area at that time to drop in and enjoy the party. The annual meeting of the Alumni Association will be held at the same time. We hope we'll be able to see many of you there.

In our excitement to tell you about the steps taken toward co-education, we forgot to tell you that the Navy unit has a new commanding officer on board--Lieutenant Roderick H. Light who has taken over for Lieutenant W.D. Greulich. Lieutenant Greulich reports to Washington next week for a bit of training before going to a new assignment, probably overseas. Keep your eyes open for him. Lieutenant Light came here from Iowa State College in Ames where he was executive officer of the V-12 unit. Between his service with the Navy in two wars, he was on the staff of Rutgers College. With him came a more regular and generous cigarette ration for the Bluejackets on the campus. Sorry some of you fellows were born just a few months too soon.

TO ITS FIGHTING MEN AROUND THE WORLD



This paragraph will sound much like one in the last letter because the news on the Spring Sports program remains on the red side of the lodger. In the past two weeks we defeated Ursinus 2 to 1 and lost to Princeton 11 to 5 and to Swarthmore 13 to 0. The track team wound up its season with a 108 to 18 defeat at the hands of Penn State and the tennis team dropped another to Lehigh 6 to 3. Tennis and track seasons have ended and the baseball team still has two games coming up--with Swarthmore tomorrow and with Franklin and Marshall on June 6.

And this paragraph also will sound much the same. The Loyalty Fund is still climbing up and up and every day we are getting just a bit more confident that by the time the books close on June 30 we will have reached the \$10,000 mark for the first time. As this letter hits the mails we are just \$70 short of \$8,000. To date 1,118 Muhlenberg men have given \$7,930 to set new highs for this little fund that helps Muhlenberg do its job. We're particularly proud of the fact that 387 men in service have accounted for \$2,655 of that amount. This is like a horse race. We have our eyes set on an objective and for the first time we are coming within sight of it as we head down the home stretch.

We took an hour out a little more than a week ago to help Dr. and Mrs. Oscar F. Bernheim celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary at a garden party given in their honor by President and Mrs. Tyson. Bernie says they have been on a honeymoon for the past fifty years and haven't come back yet. Bernie has been on the staff, you know, for nearly 40 years.

We don't know many of the details, but we have heard that Bill Barry, who many of you fellows will remember as the Navy Storekeeper for more than a year after the V-12 unit came on board, went down with his ship somewhere in the Pacific.

Word also has come that LIEUTENANT ALLAN MAKI '44, one of our airmen, is missing in action. Our prayers are that he will have the same good fortune that LIEUTENANT JOHN SCHMITTHENNER '42 and LIEUTENANT JOHN KERN '42, had when they were shot down. Incidentally, the latter two have been released from German prison camps and should be checking in this way in the very near future. We've heard of meetings just about everywhere now and Schmitthenner's letter the other day made it complete. You can imagine his surprise when, in the prison camp at Barth, Pommernania, he heard someone call his name, looked around and saw Kern. They were quartered in the same camp, the same compound and in adjacent barracks and passed many hours reliving college days. Schmitthenner also met Bob Seitzinger '42 who was a prisoner in another camp.

The trek back to Muhlenberg is definitely underway. Last week we spent a good bit of the time just talking and for a little while felt that we'd never get the Alumni Magazine--or this letter for that matter--into the mail. First of the boys to drop in was LT. ANDREW HENDRYX '45, one of those fighting infantrymen who took a beating in Germany last December. Andy passed through here enroute from a hospital in the Southland to a rehabilitation job at Camp Edwards, Mass. and sent his greetings to any of you fellows who may remember him. Haps says a lot of you should. He's thinking seriously about taking to farming when all this is over and his pretty wife, who came back here with him, seemed to be in agreement with the idea--at least she didn't voice any objections.

We got a snapshot view of the war from CAPT. GEORGE BOYER '37, who was on the Victory Train as flight surgeon for the famous 316th Troop Carrier Group from El Alamein in Africa right up to the final victory in Germany. His Presidential Citations indicate that he was with the unit when it brought up the supplies that helped General Alexander turn the Nazis back from the Suez Canal and turn the tide of the war, that he participated in the invasions of Sicily and Italy, that he knows more than he will read in history books about the D Day invasions of France and that he might be able to tell a few tales about the famous raids on the Ploesti airfields. There are just eight battle stars on his theatre ribbon.

Talking about citations and the like, the PFC with the DFC was back



the other day--the inimitable AL PIERCE '42 of that never-to-be-forgotten team of Pierce and Shoemaker. Al got himself the Distinguished Flying Cross and an Oak Leaf Cluster while flying over the Hump with the Air Transport Command to keep the supply lines open to the 14th Air Force in China. He claims they just handed them to him and he doesn't know why. Al spent 14 months in India and before that had a number of flights to his credit into Africa and various points in the continent. Oh yes, before he came home the Army made him a corporal. Incidentally, he is one of the boys who participated in the evacuation of Kweilin--and a few others he's not talking about. He made 86 flights over the Hump and has some 1,500 combat hours in the air to his credit.

We found out what the French Croix de Guerre looks like when LT. JULIUS KREUZER '45, pilot of a B-26 Marauder, dropped in to say hello. He received the award from General DeGaulle for support of the French Army in Italy. Kreuzer was overseas for a year and completed 66 combat missions over Germany, Italy, and France. In addition to the Croix de Guerre with Palm, he wears the Air Medal with six clusters and a Presidential Citation received at Cassino. Right now he's enroute to a new job for the Army Air Forces at Laughlin Field, Del Rio, Texas.

We're very late in opening the mail bag, but here goes:

The War Department reports that LT. BURTON SEXTON '42 is deputy disbursing officer with that world-wide banking and foreign exchange system dealing in the currencies of 36 different countries and now operated by the Finance Division of the USAAF Air Transport Command at nearly 100 stations on territory held by the Allies. He is on the staff of the office of the ATC base in Paris, the largest and most important air terminus in Europe. We had quite a grand letter from LT. BOB DIBBELL '42 who took a few of the boys for a ride over blitzed Germany on the day after V-E Day. For the moment, it's enough to tell you that it looked different to him after peace had come than while he was helping make that peace a reality. We're planning to publish the letter in full in the July issue of the Magazine. As a companion piece to it, we'll publish another from PFC. RALPH W. BAGGER '45 who was a part of the V-E Day celebration in France. Perhaps by the time that issue goes to press we'll have a few more observations on the big day around the world.

V-E Day found SGT. RUSSELL KIRK '45 in the rural area of Germany with nothing to celebrate and with nothing more exciting to look forward to than a long visit in Germany with the Army of Occupation. As soon as he gets back home he wants to start earning his Varsity M at Muhlenberg. SGT. CLEVE KENNEDY '43 was mighty glad for the big day after six and a half months of fighting in Germany. He is with the 104th Infantry--the famous Timberwolves who set a new record for consecutive days in combat in the European Theatre. They shattered the record that was set by the Third Infantry back in Africa. Although PFC. BUD BUTTERWICK '46 finds the country east of the Rhine very beautiful, he wants no part of Germany on his menu. With the many Muhlenberg men who helped make V-E Day possible, SGT. DICK KINARD '43 played his part, particularly in the crossing of the Rhine at the Remagen bridgehead. For a long time, he says, he felt like a duck sitting in a shooting gallery. Things improved, however, when he found himself completely surrounded by thousands of bottles of champagne and knew that water was difficult to get. He also helped clean out the prize Ruhr pocket and was around on the day when his division took 22,000 prisoners.

From France PFC. LUTHER NEUBAUER '35 reports that the life of Marseilles, where he has been stationed since November, is almost normal again with the debris rapidly disappearing and new construction taking its place. PVT. TIPPY JOHNSON '31, discharged from a hospital in England, crossed France in one of those famous Forty and Eights which he describes as a combination "cattle truck, WPA outhouse, and Dorney Park roller coaster." But through the slats he did manage to see fields of crimson poppies, bomb craters, beat-up towns and--of course--slick-looking chicks and happy G.I.'s. In Italy LT. COL. FRANK M. BROWN '19 met LT. ALLAN RITTER '33. The latter, according to Frank, is helping the Navy do a swell job at Palermo. Colonel Brown heard the V-E Day news while flying over the Mediterranean.



When we jump, we really jump and this time it's to India and a report from SGT. HAROLD HELFRICH '44. Over there men heard the news of V-E Day but realized that in their own theatre there was still a big job to be done. What cheered them was the thought that with the pressure off of one side they'd soon be getting the help necessary to finish it. Sounds as though he's getting just a little bit fed up with India--but then we may be wrong. And talking about jumps, we hear that CMDR. J.A. MILLER '24, who has been in North Africa ever since we first caught up with him, is either coming back or is already back with a new address in Winchester, Va. And another jump--this time to T/SGT. RALPH KIEFFER '29 who got back to England after detached duty that took him into Belgium, Holland, and Germany.

Our Army out in the Philippines is really building up. During the past week or so we've heard from ENSIGN BOB HOLBEN '44, LT. MIKE TRUCHSES '26, LT. PAUL FRITSCH '40, PVT. FRANCIS GENDALL '30, and PVT. JAMES REPPERT '45. Fritsch hit his particular island on D Day, a half hour after the first wave (small letters) went on shore. He finds some very attractive people there but, according to their custom, if you have a date Mom and Pop must go with you. Truchses, who was flying the Cardinal and Gray in Honolulu, wasn't in the Philippines very long before he had his first reunion with Bill Henninger and already there's talk of an alumni club there. Mike has been overseas for 22 months and he's ready to come home any time the Navy has a boat available. Gendall is on a secret assignment that he says will make a very interesting story once it can be told. He's attached to an amphibious tractor battalion. Reppert, who had some duty in Australia before hitting the Philippines, finds people and places very interesting.

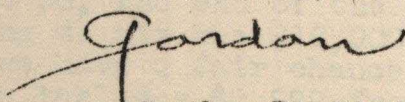
At sea in the Pacific crops up more frequently on the mail coming into the office. We have heard from ENSIGN BOB HALE '44, on board a rescue ship that is being kept plenty busy; from ENSIGN JIM BUTTERWICK '44, who believes the Navy recruiting posters now that he has seen Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, Eniwetok, Ulithi, Palau, Leyte, Samar, and a few other points; from ENSIGN FRITZ RAKER '40 and HAROLD STEWART '43 who are on the same big battlegroup and have witnessed the invasions of Palau, Philippines, and Iwo Jima and who were the first to strike French Indo China, Hongkong, Saigon, Okinawa, Formosa, and finally Tokyo; from BOB REBER '40, whose ship has been in places like Morotai, Leyte, Luzon, Palawan, and Mininao; from SI/c GEORGE LEWIS '47, who exchanged radio greetings with BOB ROCKMAKER '40 when their ships were quite close together; from LT. DONALD MACK '45, who reports that Marine JIM FRANKLIN '41 is on board his ship; from LT. BILL DOABLER '38, still on the move and expecting more moves; from ENSIGN BOB HALDEMAN '44 who is raring to go when Muhlenberg gets started on the proposed new Sports Building; from LT. PAUL CANDALINO '43, who says LT. ART HILL '43 looks good with his new silver bars (on the shoulder); and from ENSIGN BILL CROASDALE '45, who left LT. JOHN WAGNER'S '31 bailiwick down in Florida and headed West.

Well, that cleans up the overseas mail and here are the promotions we have heard about recently: SERGEANT RUSSELL KIRK '45; SERGEANT MERLE WERTZ '43; ENSIGN JOHN J. MCVLACHLAN '44; CORPORAL ANGELO ALBANO '46; PHARMACIST MATE FIRST CLASS JACK E. DOOLIN '35; and ENSIGN THOMAS N. KOERWER '44.

We rambled on at such great length at the beginning of this letter that we got to the bottom of the last page before we hit the bottom of the mail bag. Next time we'll try to take the wind out of our sails a bit earlier and leave more space for the letters. I can assure you we all got a big kick out of hearing from so many of you fellows. The way we feel about it here, the more mail the merrier. Keep them coming in so that we'll have something to pass on to the rest of the fellows.

Here's the best of everything to you and don't forget to drop in when you get back this way and to write if you can't come back.

Sincerely,



Gordon B. Fister  
For the Alumni Office